Shoot the Moon by gonfalonier

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Summary:

Jonathan just wants to keep his mom out of trouble. This is just about the only way he knows how to do it.

Shoot the Moon

Author's Note:

jonathan is maybe like 16 here i guess since it takes place before the series. please let me know if there are any other warnings i need to add. that's why i keep comments moderated, so you don't have to air your business out to god and everybody. thanks.

The kid's always had a moon face. Wide and blasted and walked on, two eyes like landing modules and mouth like a rift, like a fault across the surface. Jim's seen him mostly in profile, three-quarters, Jonathan looking over his shoulder to make sure no one's sneaking up. Jonathan draws attention by trying to avoid it, his hunched up shoulders obscuring his face as he skulks through the grocery store, wherever. Always looks like he's headed for the cemetery.

Jim's looking at him full-on now, no shadow. It's dark outside, but in his office the fluorescents are humming alive. His chair creaks when he shifts in it; the soft bulge of his flank laps against the armrest. He feels huge. It's not that Byers is small, he's hit his growth spurt. He's got the kind of body that comes from stacking crates. But he's coiled down on his knees right now on the floor in front of Jim, and when Jim looks down at him it's like looking down the wrong end of binoculars. Jon might as well be down in a grave. Jim's been resting the saddle of his thumb and forefinger against his mouth, switching his eyes from Jonathan's moon face to the grey tile floor to his own lap. When he shifts again and takes a breath to break the silence, Jon flinches and then scolds himself and then regains composure. Jim says to him, "Kid, what the fuck is this."

"It's what I've got, Hop." Jon blinks and tightens his lips and looks defiant. "This is how it works, right?" he adds on an uncomfortable shrug. Those hunched shoulders. Jim wants to see his neck. Instead he says to Jonathan, "No. This is not how anything works. Stand up. Just get up."

Jon scrambles back on his hands but stays kneeling. He's in a pose now, vulnerable and panicked and immovable. He says, "No." His brows are crimped with concern but they still don't meet in the middle. "I can make this right if you let me. Just don't come after my mom."

"Son, I'm not coming after anyone. Just calm down."

"No," Jonathan says. "We're dealing with this now."

Jim's tired. He's sore in the hips, his back's tight, he doesn't have the energy to act as rotten as he feels. This thing Joyce's boy is asking for is rotten to the fucking center, and it's stupid. Unnecessary. Joyce isn't looking at jail time, not for a couple hot checks. The fine's a bitch, but that's not up to him, that's a state deal. They can scrounge it up. If he turns her in, he might even be able to help her out a little, set her up on a payment plan, something. Jonathan's still looking at him, and now his mouth it wet. Jim missed something somewhere. He shakes his head and says, "We're not dealing with it like this. I'm serious, kid, get up. Come on."

Jon says again, "No," and the word breaks something open in Jim's mouth. Jim feels his lips curl to bare his teeth. He leans back in his noisy chair and says to Jonathan, "Is this something you just do?"

The kid blinks and doesn't answer. He's sitting back up now, hands off the dirty floor and on his thighs, rubbing up and down.

Jim shrugs. "Doesn't seem like this is your first rodeo, is all I'm saying. If this is your go-to answer -- and we don't even have a problem yet -- makes me wonder who else has gotten this view."

Jonathan's face steels up like he's trying to make a curtain come down. Like he's thrown a dud smoke bomb that won't let him disappear. He looks and he looks and then he looks away and Jim says, "I thought so." He extends his leg and taps the welt of his boot against Jon's cheek. "I figured."

They're eye to eye again. It's silent again. Jonathan says, "Just, like," and then he stops. Jim closes his eyes and when he opens them again he can see clear as the night sky. "Just what," he says. He slumps in the chair and leans back. As he speaks he unbuttons his sleeves and rolls them up, a trick he learned on the city beat to show someone

he's in for the long haul. "You sound like you want to get this over with." He relaxes; his knees part; he plants his feet. "We need to talk about your terms."

Jonathan swallows, and then he says, "I do this, and nothing happens."

"Hm?"

"Nothing happens to mom."

Jim wants to tell him that it wouldn't anyway, not really. Unless you're skirting around on the edges like Joyce and her boys, this is small shit, maybe \$250 to fix the whole thing. He says instead, "Fine. I'll work it out. What do I say to your mother if she asks why she isn't getting brought in?"

"I don't know, man, that's your job, not mine."

Jim laughs, impressed. "Sure, kid. All right." He breathes in and then out and slides his foot out to touch Jon's knee. "All right. You're here to keep your mom's name out of the paper?"

"Yeah." Jonathan scuffs his nose with his sleeve.

"Then come on, if you're gonna."

It gets so fucking quiet then. Jim can hear each fiber on the boy's jeans as he scoots forward on the tile. Jonathan looks up at him and his mouth moves silently, and Jim says, "What?"

"One time."

"What?"

"This is -- Listen, this is one time. I'm not going to do this again."

"Right. Got it." He plucks his smokes from his breast pocket and tugs one out by his teeth. Around it he says, "Ain't I lucky." Jonathan grumbles, "Kind of, yeah."

Jim settles in. He told Jonathan this isn't how anything works, but

that was a lie, this is how a lot of stuff works. This won't be the first time this exchange has happened in this office, in this chair, on this tile floor, under these ugly lights. Jim looks up and considers turning the lights off. When he looks back down his pants are undone and Jonathan's scraping the waistband of Jim's boxers down over his thatch. "Careful," Jim mutters to him, and then he lights his cig.

The first lungful of smoke coincides with his dick popping free, and it makes him cough. "Jesus." He's still not with the program yet, his dick is soft and pudgy and trying to pay attention. Jonathan looks up blandly and says, "Too much whiskey?" Like he knows what the fuck that means. God, who popped this boy? "Too much talking," Jim answers on an exhale. "Do what you came to do."

So he does. Jonathan tries a few different angles with his hand, and in the end he needs both of them. Jim gives him a little gesture with his hand, a spin of his finger, and says, "Like a fuckin' Indian sunburn, you know? Not real hard, just --" And then Jon gets it right and Jim shuts up again. Christ. Fuck. It doesn't even feel all that good, but Jim's body responds on instinct. Delayed, like a slow, heavy bullet, he says, "I don't fucking drink whiskey." Jonathan's laughter puffs against the dome of Jim's dick and makes him hiss.

He's mostly hard now. When he glances down at himself his skin's flushed dark with blood, and that's good. His heart's picked up a little. More than a little. Wouldn't this be just the right fucking time for that heart attack he's been threatening to have for fifteen years. He can see it now, the headline spinning up, screaming that the chief of police died as he lived, with his meat on the table. He breathes out his smoke onto the top of Jonathan's head and says, "Are you gonna suck on it or what."

"You're disgusting."

"Yeah. That's true."

Jonathan moves his head forward and wets his lips before kissing the tip of Jim's dick and then opening up to take the crown in. "Holy fucking shit." Jim moves his hand from the armrest to Jon's shoulder. He wants to feel the tension there, right at the neck. He is disgusting. He wonders what he tastes like. It's been a day. Probably pretty stale,

maybe sweet, kind of. What do other guys taste like? The other guys Jon's done this to, teachers and mechanics and whoever. Jim likes to think he ranks squarely in the middle. He almost wants to stop the action and ask. He's done it before.

Instead he grunts and squeeze Jonathan's shoulder. He needs to ash his smoke, and he considers tapping it off on the top of the kid's head, but he'd hate for the cherry to come loose and set Jon's hair on fire, so he ashes on the floor. Why not treat this place like a shithole, if this is how he's going to behave.

"You know how to handle a sack, kid?" he asks. It feels good to be this low. He wants a beer. Jonathan pulls back and says, "Yeah, do you want that?" Jim nods. His lungs are burning. He says to Jonathan, "Yeah, tug on it a little." He lifts his hand up and closes it slowly into a fist. "Squeeze on it. Keep sucking. You're doing fine."

Jon mumbles, "I know," and gets his hand to work.

If Jim ever gets to retire, this is what he wants. Not in Indiana, but California, maybe. Hawaii. Florida, by the coast. And not with some weirdo kid with a wide face, these thin lips. Someone lush and pretty, big all over and older than him. He breathes out a groan at the thought. Someone he's never met, someone who doesn't exist yet in his life. With his eyes closed, Jonathan Byers could be anyone. He could be his mom. Joyce gives better head than this.

It's on the tip of his tongue to say it, too, to just spit that out there to make this whole scene even more appalling. Joyce blew him like four or five times back in high school, mostly in the back of his car where they'd 69 and act like they knew what they were doing. He bragged about it once to his buddies and she got so fucking mad. He didn't get why, at the time. He was saying nice things about her.

Jonathan's doing his best. It starts to bum Jim out. He sets his cig in the ashtray and then gets in there and pushes the heel of his hand against Jon's forehead and goes, "Hey." When Jonathan looks up his eyes are dazed and his mouth is dark. "Jesus," Jim says. "You're into that, huh?"

Jonathan doesn't answer. He's unfocused and slack, in some other

world. Jim's been there, too, that place of tender awe. Jim's been there, just not like this. He keeps Jonathan at arm's length, pushes the hair up off that wide, smooth forehead. He wonders if Joyce drank when she was pregnant. He folds his free hand around Jonathan's, wrapped around his piece. Jonathan says, loose and slurred, "Was I not doing good?" Jim winces and shakes his head. He says to Jonathan, "Just hang back for a second, son. Just follow my lead. Just hang back and let me seal the deal."

His cigarette's dead in the ashtray. He's low at the edge of the chair with his legs splayed, chin doubled as he gazes down the barrel of his body to where Jonathan is panting.

Jon says, "Let me finish."

Jim grumbles back to him, "Shut the fuck up," and then starts to move their tangled hands. He lets his head fall back so when he opens his eyes it's just a view of the water damage on the acoustical tiles. Jonathan's not going to leave until he's got a guarantee his family's in the clear, and this is the only way that's going to happen. It's the only way it's happened for a while. He thinks back to when he was sixteen and he could pop off three or four times a day; when he had to, to be able to fucking walk. Maybe that's why he is the way he is now, maybe he used up all his energy whacking off and getting head in high school and that's why his hipbones pop when he rocks up into Jonathan's tight grip around his dick.

He feels a breath on the wet tip of his meat and he groans, "No. Just. Don't, just back off." And then he snorts in a breath when Jonathan whispers, "I want it."

"Fuck."

Jim speeds their hands up. This is some shit. "You want it?" he says to Jonathan, and he feels the kid nod. Jim shifts his hand from Jonathan's shoulder into his limp hair and grits his teeth. "Say it again."

"I do. I want it. Sorry."

"Yeah," Jim says. "Sorry. Fuckin' sorry. Get your --" He pulls

Jonathan forward and grunts when the hard plate of teeth bumps into his cockhead. "Keep it open. Keep it open, son, go with me here." He pauses his hand and hauls himself up so he can get the right angle. He doesn't want to give the kid pinkeye. He looks down to where Jon's mouth is loose and breathing humidly on the sticky skin of the dick in his hand. He's looking up at him, too, challenging. It really is a hell of a view. "Fuck." Inside him, a familiar twinge. Finally, something he wants to feel. He bares his teeth again.

Jonathan's hand on his balls is sweaty now, but he's still going for it, still trying. Good hustle. Jon's hair is too fine to get a handle on so Jim presses his palm down hard on the top of his head to keep him in place. He could crumple the boy like a can. He untangles their fingers and swats Jon's hand away so he can take over the way that'll actually do the trick. He grabs his dick at the root and doesn't stroke it so much as shake it. This is as hard as he's been in a year. His face is turning red and he knows it. He says to Jonathan, "Look at it. Look at it. You want it? Fucking look at it." Jonathan does. Jim wants to stand up and watch him follow and crane for it, but it's too much work and he can't risk losing his momentum.

At the right moment, the right split second between getting it and losing it, Jim digs his thumbnail into the soft flesh of the helmet of his dick, and that's the ballgame. Jonathan recoils at the first shot, there on his face, his jaw, and then he breaks the rules and ducks out from under Jim's hand so he can get his mouth back around Jim's piece and suck out the rest. "Fuck," Jim says, and he draws the word out until he runs out of breath. Jonathan makes a sound that reverberates through him, and that earns both of them one more weak pulse of fluid, and then it's done.

Jonathan sits back on his knees and wipes his chin with the back of his hand and then licks it clean. He's breathing hard; not as hard as Jim. Jim watches him, watches Jon's messy mouth, sweat-sticky forehead, and he gets a wave of nausea that starts in his nose that he tries to fight off by curling his lip. He coughs and says to Jonathan, "Clean up your mess. Your mother never taught you, put away your toys?"

[&]quot;Fuck you."

"Yeah. Ain't over til you do it, though."

"God."

So Jon does it. His hands are warm and sticky. Jim reaches for his smokes again, customary. After the zipper's done and the clasp's done and he's done and Jon's done, he holds the pack out and says, "You want?"

"No. Ew."

"All right, don't be fucking rude."

Jonathan wipes his palms up and down on his jeans and says, "Are we done? Is that it?"

Jim frowns around the unlit cig in his mouth. He zeroes in on where the boy's jeans are lumped up in the front, down the right leg. "Depends," he says. He lights his smoke and extends his leg again. His knee creaks. He pushes his sole against the tender, packed-in tip of the thing through the denim, and Jonathan jerks away with a hiss. Jim goes, "That looks pretty painful. You wanna take care of it before you head home?"

"No." Jonathan sounds appalled. "God. No. Don't."

"Just being friendly, damn. Fine. Suit yourself." He leans over to his desk and picks up the report, pink and yellow paper with a black carbon sheet in between, and shows it to Jonathan, who leans forward, scans it over, and nods. Jim takes his cigarette in his thumb and middle finger and touches the cherry to the carbon, and up it goes. The carbon burns fast, and the rest of the report burns through the middle like the opening of Bonanza. When it's crumpled and useless, he shoves it in his mug, half-full of cold coffee, and then he says, "There. We're good."

"You promise?"

Jim takes a drag and nods. "Mmhm."

It's a struggle for Jonathan to get up. Jim sympathizes. Jon dusts off his knees and adjusts his pants and tries to tug his shirt down but it's pointless. Jim gestures to him with his cig and says, "Final offer, son. I don't mind."

"Go fuck yourself."

"Mm."

Jonathan shoves his hair away from his face. "This never happened," he says to Jim. Jim can see the regret rising up in him. Buyer's remorse. Jonathan's about to say something else, maybe about to make some speech, something noble. Instead, he stutters, turns, and heads to the door with a hitch in his step.

Jim calls after him, "Come back any time," and then exhales his drag. He looks around the office and then finally stands. His whole body protests. He stretches, grunting, his face scrunched up. He wants a beer.

He takes his mug to the sink in the break room and rinses it out, washes the charred goop off his fingers and down the drain. The station's too quiet now, ungodly quiet, and Jim's heart is starting to ache. If he were younger, if he were more functional, he'd swing by someone's place and give her a smile and keep her warm for the night. But his beer's at home, his meds are at home. In his own bed, alone, he can wallow and sweat. He can talk to himself.

In the Blazer, his heavy exhale fogs the windshield, and he wipes it clean with the backs of his fingers. The drive home seems impossibly long. Maybe he'll just stay the night out here, sleep in the back, go back inside and sleep in the drunk tank. "My beer's at home," he sighs. He rolls his neck to crack it and he catches his own eye in the rearview mirror. He says to his eyes, "What is the matter with you." He looks straight ahead again, starts the truck, turns on the wipers to try to get rid of the smudge before he remembers it's on the inside. "Fuck this," he mumbles, and eases into reverse.